



Our skills strategy 2021 to 2025

Part of our wider people strategy



Foreword from Lynne



I'm really pleased to share with you our new skills strategy. This will set us up for success both now and for the future. It will enable us to be forward-thinking, taking into account both the short and long-term skills requirements for Thames Water as well as the external skills landscape and wider economic factors.

A skilled workforce supported by a robust education and skills system will drive social mobility, promote inclusion and provide good work for all. We want to contribute to the creation of a fair society and tackle real challenges, such as digital skill shortages and in-work poverty, and ensure our people receive the right investment in skills development to have successful and sustainable careers.

Our new skills strategy is based on four principles:

- 1 Improve the diversity of our workforce by building a pipeline of skills from local communities and the education sector
- 2 Create careers, not just jobs, by investing in our people and fostering a culture of lifelong learning
- 3 Establish sustainable strategic skills partnerships
- 4 Adopt a leading position in the industry and with our supply chain on the development of skills

Through delivery of this skills strategy, we're determined to make a real impact:

- Investing in an appropriately skilled workforce
- Providing opportunities for those not in education, employment or training
- Working with the education sector to link curriculum with careers
- Delivering quality apprenticeships for current and future employees
- Connecting with local communities to demonstrate Thames Water as a good employer

I would like to thank all those who've contributed to this strategy for their passion, enthusiasm and ambition to make a difference. I'm proud we have a strategy that has had input from our people, stakeholders, our supply chain and many external organisations.

I look forward to working with many of you to bring this strategy to life over the coming months and years. By connecting with our colleagues and communities, we'll create an inclusive and diverse workforce that fuels personal and business growth and builds skills not just for today but for the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lynne'.

Lynne Graham
HR Director





Where we are now

When it comes to our people, one of our biggest challenges is securing the core skills we need now and for the future - particularly those that are industry specific or in high demand and short supply.

This challenge is made harder for a few reasons. Right now, we don't have a long-term view of the skills and resources we need to deliver our Purpose for the future. We also want to promote social mobility in our local communities by improving employability, but we don't have enough of an in-depth understanding to do this yet.

That's why we're bringing these activities together under our new skills strategy. This will support the outcomes we want to achieve, including driving economic prosperity and social value in the communities we serve, and help us to deliver our Purpose for the future.

Our skills strategy is part of our wider people strategy, built on:

1. Engagement
2. Leadership
3. Organisation alignment
4. The employee life cycle
5. Skills

What we want to be known for

It's up to us to engage our people and make sure our business reflects the diversity of the local communities we serve.

This isn't a new goal for us - in fact, we've already set up several initiatives to help us achieve this across the business. But many of these projects currently run independently of each other.

Now it's time to join up our approach.

We know how much pride Team Thames takes in caring for the environment, so we're planning to broaden this thinking to include 'green' benefits that can be offered to our communities in terms of skills, jobs and careers.

And while our diversity and inclusion policy is well established across the business, we want to develop a more diverse workforce as well as support emerging talent strategies.

By 2025, we hope to:

- Address our current skills gap
- Build a pipeline of core skills
- Meet even more public value commitments
- Increase our socioeconomic diversity
- Engage more local communities
- Grow local economies by developing local skills

“As we serve such a diverse community, it's essential we embed diversity into every aspect of our business.”

Lynne Graham
HR Director



Our skills strategy explained

We've designed this skills strategy carefully to help us prepare the core skills pipeline we need for today and tomorrow. This will ultimately support us all in meeting our Purpose: to deliver life's essential service, so our customers, communities and environment can thrive.

<p>Principle 1</p> <p>Improve the diversity of our workforce by building a pipeline of skills from local communities and the education sector</p>	<p>Principle 2</p> <p>Create careers, not just jobs, by investing in our people and fostering a culture of lifelong learning</p>	<p>Principle 3</p> <p>Establish sustainable strategic skills partnerships</p>	<p>Principle 4</p> <p>Adopt a leading position in the industry and with our supply chain on the development of skills</p>
<p>This will help us to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase productivity• Increase people performance• Reduce recruitment costs• Promote socioeconomic diversity• Support the development of STEM and digital skills	<p>This will help us to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase employee engagement• Strengthen our skills base• Build an experienced and flexible workforce• Help us spend our apprenticeship levy more effectively• Empower our experienced workforce to educate future generations	<p>This will help us to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gain more influence to achieve our goals• Provide significant benefits and cost savings across the business• Support local and national economies• Build a positive brand association through our Thames Water Academy, which will support learning and development	<p>This will help us to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build our reputation• Demonstrate our positive impact on economic prosperity to the government and local authorities• Pioneer education initiatives

Our principles will be underpinned by three core pillars:

1. Creating a strong support structure to deliver our strategy
2. Creating a long-term view of skills through strategic workforce planning
3. Equipping our leaders with the skills, knowledge and behaviours they need to be effective

Breaking down our principles



Principle 1

Improve the diversity of our workforce by building a pipeline of skills from local communities and the education sector



The background

UK skill shortages are an ongoing challenge for our economy, and many sectors are struggling to recruit people with the right skills.

Youth unemployment is high, disabled people can still face challenges gaining employment and ex-military personnel are almost twice as likely to be unemployed as civilians. One in three of those living in care and 'care leavers' are not in education, employment or training. People with criminal convictions are still widely discriminated against, despite having the right to work. And refugees face barriers in terms of qualifications, language and documentation.

Many people also lack the essential skills referenced in the Skills Builder Framework and face other challenges that act as barriers to accessing employment.

In December 2017, the government published its national careers strategy, which aims to make Britain fairer, improve social mobility and offer opportunity to everyone. They've also launched a brand-new

Kickstart Scheme in response to the coronavirus pandemic, offering six-month job placements to young people at risk of long-term unemployment.

In line with the government's strategy, we believe everyone should be entitled to a careers education that helps them understand the opportunities open to them and inspires and motivates them for the future.

That's why high-quality Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) is so essential in helping individuals make informed choices about the courses and careers they want to pursue.

CEIAG prepares people for the workplace by making them aware of the skills and attitudes employers expect them to have. It can also help increase sign-ups for local apprenticeships, boost interest in STEM subjects and make sure no one is left behind - no matter what their background is.

While many view CEIAG as a benefit for young people, we believe it needs to be accessible for people of all ages. There's a huge 'untapped workforce' we want to engage with, and it's up to us to take a leadership role.

As the UK steps away from the EU, we need to focus on growing talent from our communities to fill our vacancies and address skill shortages.

We need to offer access to regular training or reskilling to help individuals access the workplace in the first place.

And we need to prepare for the demands of the future workplace so our people are ready for changes to come.



Principle 1

Where we are today

In primary schools

Our long-running schools education programme teaches children - our future customers - all about the world of water.

In our education centres, we hold interactive, informative learning sessions about the water cycle and environment, and offer tours of our operational sites.

Thanks to the Earth Trust, Groundwork and the Engineering Development Trust, we've been able to run even more learning sessions in our classrooms.

Through our community speaker programme, many of our employees have volunteered their time to speak about our work with all kinds of community groups, including schools.

In addition, we've built a strong relationship with the Skills Builder Framework to help primary schoolchildren develop key skills.

In secondary schools

We run our flagship STEM activity for older students across the region.

It's called the Network Challenge, and it encourages groups of students to plan, build and test a water network from scratch. We often take this out to schools and events in the form of competitions and workshops.

We couldn't do this without the help of our established education partners, who are all focused on supporting environmental or STEM-based learning.

But there's more to be done to establish a referral route for students interested in real-world opportunities.

In the community

Our community investment fund supports several local charities and environmental projects across our region.

We also run various initiatives, including 'Give someone a start', to help adults gain experience in the workplace.

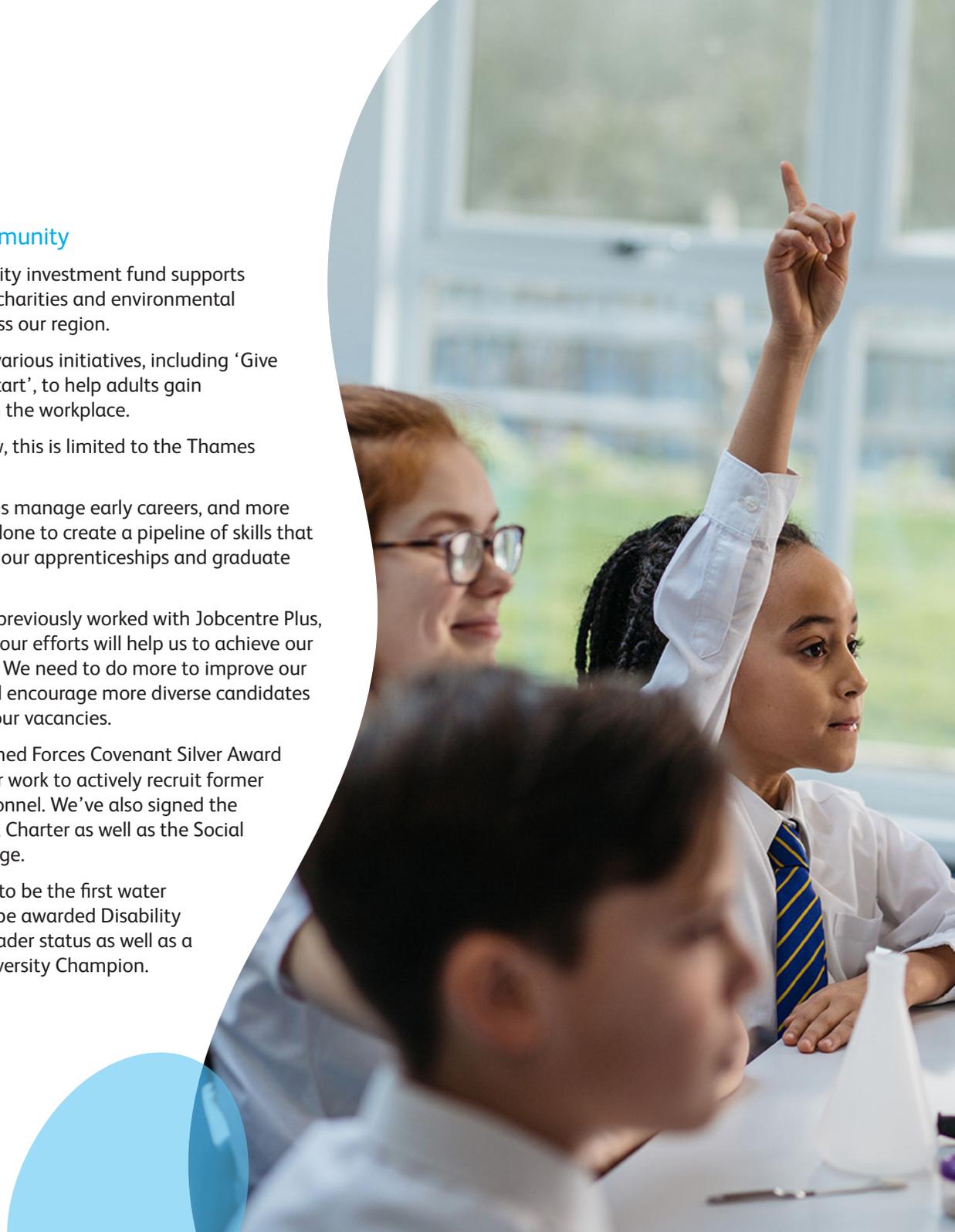
But right now, this is limited to the Thames Valley area.

Various teams manage early careers, and more needs to be done to create a pipeline of skills that goes beyond our apprenticeships and graduate scheme.

While we've previously worked with Jobcentre Plus, streamlining our efforts will help us to achieve our overall goals. We need to do more to improve our outreach and encourage more diverse candidates to apply for our vacancies.

We're an Armed Forces Covenant Silver Award holder for our work to actively recruit former military personnel. We've also signed the Race at Work Charter as well as the Social Mobility Pledge.

We're proud to be the first water company to be awarded Disability Confident Leader status as well as a Stonewall Diversity Champion.





Principle 1

The opportunity

To help us build a future-ready skills pipeline, we need to successfully expand and enhance our education programme.

We want to go beyond educating young people about what we do and why we do it, which means introducing CEIAG into the classroom. This will help us to promote the full range of opportunities across our business and give us the chance to empower a future generation of workers.

As well as making sure students develop the knowledge, attitude and practical skills they need to succeed, we want to support the development of STEM and digital skills, which are essential for the water industry moving forward.

We need to offer clearly defined career paths and highlight how individuals can develop and grow their skills at Thames Water. We also need to build a more extensive talent pipeline for vacancies, including apprenticeships. This may even help to reduce our recruitment costs.

Did you know?
Four or more encounters
with the world of work
significantly increases
a young person's
future earnings

While we're delivering a more extensive careers programme from primary school to university, there will be a chance to provide support to schools with a higher than average pupil premium.

We can also do more to attract people from our local communities by removing barriers and offering everyone equal opportunity to seek sustainable employment.

This includes engaging with our supply chain to promote roles in the right way.

Key actions we can take

- Help those furthest from the labour market access high-quality jobs and training opportunities
- Create a pipeline of skills from the local community
- Tailor our interventions to boost the skills of future generations
- Support the government's Kickstart Scheme
- Engage with the 'untapped workforce' to widen diversity within the workplace
- Collaborate with, support and challenge our supply chain, setting out what is expected from a responsible business
- Focus on neurodiversity to support real gaps we experience in niche areas



Principle 1

Our recommendations

- Enhance our current schools engagement programme from primary to university, including skills training and career programmes linked to the Gatsby Benchmark, Skills Builder Framework, STEM and industry learning
- Offer support to schools with a higher than average pupil premium
- Provide additional support for pupils from SEND schools
- Deliver experiences of the workplace to raise awareness of industry roles and opportunities incorporating the Skills Builder Framework
- Create a network of enterprise advisors to help the education sector implement its career strategy and link this to our people's personal development
- Offer career talks and a parental engagement programme to dispel industry myths and help parents engage with their children's learning
- Support an established mentoring programme for 14 to 18-year olds and employer encounters
- Enhance our programme to support industry learning for teachers
- Create industry projects for students, including more resources
- Establish a scholarship/bursary programme for those most in need
- Support technical education reforms, including T-levels for 16 to 19-year-olds, to help young people develop the knowledge, attitude and practical skills needed to thrive in the workplace
- Support traineeships (pre-apprenticeships) to provide young people age 16-18 with the skills and experience they need for their future careers, and help them secure an apprenticeship or job in the future
- Offer internships to students and graduates to introduce them to a working environment and develop their soft skills, including communicating, personal effectiveness, presenting, creative problem solving and influencing skills
- Utilise the apprenticeship ambassador network
- Enhance our relationship with University Technical Colleges to boost pipeline referrals to apprenticeships
- Develop relationships with specific schools based on skill requirements
- Widen our Skills Builder partnership to secondary schools
- Create pathways to help people facing barriers to access the workplace
- Build an education pipeline to filter candidates from schools
- Widen participation by creating community outreach routes to deliver employability training and sector-based work academies, including interventions that support the development of digital, literacy and numeracy skills
- Support the government's Kickstart Scheme by offering a minimum of 50 placements
- Review our recruitment policies, ensuring 100% of job adverts are inclusive by design and removing any real or perceived barriers to employment
- Establish a Thames Water Academy for further education, higher education, University Technical Colleges and community organisations
- Ensure 100% of recruiting colleagues have appropriate inclusion training with diverse shortlists and interview panels
- Enhance our 'Give someone a start' work by increasing the opportunities to more sectors and communities
- Agree candidate priority groups and targets and support appropriate covenants, eg Care Leaver Covenant, Social Mobility Pledge
- Enhance our community investment fund to support more charities that develop people skills and act as a pipeline into employment
- Develop the right community strategy to create a solid pipeline of skills for our business

Breaking down our principles



Principle 2

Create careers, not just jobs, by investing in our people and fostering a culture of lifelong learning

The background

Investing in home-grown talent is integral to our overall people strategy.

We know not everyone has the same opportunity to develop the essential skills referenced in the Skills Builder Framework. There are all sorts of challenges that can act as barriers, whether it's lack of opportunities, financial pressures or a poor educational experience.

If our people lack confidence in their skills, they may also be prone to low morale, which can result in under-performance.

We believe providing every individual with an opportunity to develop and enhance their current skills will do the opposite, driving positive employee engagement. Removing barriers and setting clear career paths will also help. It's up to us to show our people that we care about their progress as part of Team Thames.

Our business environment is always changing. To grow, our people need to be kept up to speed with the latest in-demand skills, whether this be through organic or more formal training.

As these changes happen so quickly, our apprenticeship and graduate schemes will also be key for helping us bring in new talent and upskill our existing workforce.

Our government is keen to increase the range and number of apprenticeships across the UK, which is why they've introduced an apprenticeship levy to allow employers like us to take control of their requirements.

Did you know?

Along with 500 other businesses around the world, we've signed the Social Mobility Pledge as part of our commitment to tackling the opportunity gap





Principle 2

Where we are today

Our apprenticeship programme

We've provided apprenticeships for a number of years through our well-established programme in engineering. We haven't reviewed this regularly, and in certain areas, our schemes may no longer reflect the needs of our business.

That's why we're working to widen our apprenticeship offering, which we hope will start to increase uptake from early 2021.

In the past, we've always sourced our apprentices externally - we're planning to extend the scheme internally so our people can benefit too. But there's still more work to do before we can align these plans with our wider business requirements.

Our graduate programme

Every year, our established graduate programme employs around 25 graduates.

Right now, this is managed separately from our apprenticeship scheme. By aligning the two, we can help make sure that all our schemes are designed to increase diversity across our workforce. One way to do this would be by removing any unnecessary entry requirements.

Training and development

For some time, we've been making plans to create a Thames Water Academy to support continued learning and development. Our skills strategy will help us to develop these plans further.

We've also created bespoke in-house training to cover essential topics, and there's an opportunity to review these in line with national accreditation.

We know that some of our workforce still experience barriers to careers and development, including ESOL and SEN requirements, so this is an ongoing challenge to consider.

In operations, individuals aged 50+ represent 36% of our workforce. We're ready to tap into this knowledge and experience to help educate the future workforce and generations to come.

The opportunity

It's up to us to create a culture of lifelong learning for our business. We believe this will provide our people with more opportunities as well as improve their quality of life.

With youth unemployment on the rise, a drive towards apprenticeships will also help us to discover and develop local talent. Recent research suggests we've underspent on our apprenticeship levy, so we have a prime opportunity to invest in this for the future.

We want anyone at any age and any level to have the opportunity to undertake an apprenticeship with us.

By investing in our people, we hope to boost morale, identify potential future leaders, improve employee engagement, drive efficiency, quality and lower staff turnover.

Key actions we can take

- Identify clear career pathways for all roles
- Embed a culture of lifelong learning
- Align our apprenticeship and graduate schemes
- Build a network of mentors to tap into the knowledge of our experienced workforce
- Make a sustainable commitment to attracting, retaining, training and developing local talent
- Invest in our people by offering appropriate training that removes barriers and promotes career progression
- Offer all our people the opportunity to undertake an apprenticeship from level 2 to level 7, including degree level
- Address the skills gap by tackling digital and in-work poverty





Our recommendations

- Create an emerging talent team (including early careers) to support post 16+ intervention
- Review current apprenticeship scheme to create a clear strategy that forms part of our wider emerging skills strategy and includes upskilling for our people and a wider offering across sectors and levels
- Align recruitment, induction and delivery of graduate and apprentice schemes to remove stigma and create parity of esteem (giving equal priority to mental health and physical health)
- Support external hires and internal employees through apprenticeships across a variety of sectors and levels
- Assess all future vacancies against a defined apprenticeship standard to determine if the job could be an apprenticeship and offer to internal employees for upskilling
- Widen apprenticeship offering from level 2 to higher and degree level and offer multiple apprenticeships to each individual
- Make sure career paths are clear for all roles, including apprentices and graduates
- Enhance our mentorship programme across the business and for those looking to access opportunities
- Ensure 100% of mentors have clear responsibilities and support to help them educate and transfer knowledge to the workforce of the future
- Review Thames Water training to become nationally recognised
- Adopt the Skills Builder Framework into all training and development, apprenticeships, graduate and mentorship schemes
- Create an apprenticeship ambassador network to promote apprenticeships, offer mentoring to the existing workforce and engage the wider education sector
- Develop technically skilled and leadership apprenticeships for our people to enable them to become future leaders
- Review the current performance development review (PDR) process to include a four-box approach: Objectives, Values/behaviours, Personal development and Community
- Make sure PDRs are centrally tracked and all four areas are measured correctly to ensure successful completion
- Widen volunteering opportunities and align them to personal development plans and community/public value goals
- Enhance our current training provision to tackle barriers, including maths, digital and special educational needs (SEN)
- Explore other accreditation and upskilling opportunities to unlock talent within the business
- Remove apprentice headcount from business-as-usual modelling (for annual intake) to allow more scope to successfully support apprentices

Breaking down our principles



Principle 3

Establish sustainable strategic skills partnerships

The background

Employer feedback shows just how many young people leaving education aren't equipped with the skills they need to successfully enter the workplace.

There are many initiatives to bridge the gap between education and industry, but with so much choice, it can be hard to know what's best. In addition, all of these initiatives put demands on employer's time as well as resources. This means many employers struggle to engage with younger people. They also lack a presence in further and higher education, which only widens the divide.

While many community organisations are now providing employability training to tackle this situation, there's still a limited pipeline into employment. This means we're stuck in a vicious circle.

The government's careers strategy and the introduction of T-levels now requires employers to take an active role in working and engaging with the education sector.

With London still experiencing pockets of deprivation, worklessness and underemployment, we need to work closely with educational, community and business organisations across the capital to provide more opportunities for younger people.

This includes equipping young people with in-demand skills such as STEM and digital.

Where we are today

We've already built good relationships with several schools and University Technical Colleges. However, these tend to be more tactical than strategic, and most of our educational courses focus on environmental messages rather than opportunities within the industry.

While we also engage with a number of external parties, such as Energy & Utilities Skills and Business in the Community, we tend to collaborate on a couple of key areas rather than a broader skills agenda.

Meanwhile, we work closely with local authorities to handle a broad range of issues, but we're usually viewed as a provider of services rather than a local employer.

We don't currently engage with further or higher education.

The opportunity

Strategic partnerships will have a major impact on how quickly and easily we can achieve our goals and objectives.

Working and collaborating with like-minded businesses will also help to provide significant benefits and cost savings.

By working together, we can address key skill gaps and build an experienced, flexible workforce that's adaptable to future skill requirements, including automation and technology.

This will help to make sure our people gain the skills, qualifications and experience they need to progress on their chosen career path, which will also boost productivity levels.

Key actions we can take

- Work together to pioneer new approaches that address skills gaps
- Collaborate on a pipeline of skills within the local community
- Use our support network to target people facing barriers and help them access training and employment
- Explore new ways to strengthen our skills base for our people and local communities
- Work together to increase the range, levels and occupations of apprenticeships on offer and create new progression routes



Principle 3

Our recommendations

- Establish strategic partnerships within further education (FE) and higher education (HE) to create a pipeline of skills
- Utilise these strategic partnerships to broaden the apprenticeship opportunities we offer for level 2 to level 7, including higher and degree level across multiple disciplines, for our people and external recruits
- Engage with FE to help us upskill our people and build bespoke employability training
- Engage with local authorities, the Greater London Authority and Local Enterprise Partnerships to understand the UK's wider skills agenda as well as key priorities we can support
- Establish a strategic partnership with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to develop our pipeline of skills further
- Work with DWP to create sector-based work academies to bridge skills gap and support reskilling
- Agree and establish community organisations we need to engage with to create bespoke employability training that meets our industry and internal requirements
- Agree top community priority groups that we could provide upskilling, mentorship and/or other opportunities for
- Establish strategic relationships with The Careers & Enterprise Company and Teach First to support the UK's national careers strategy, education activities and initiatives such as STEM and digital
- Engage with University Technical Colleges to make the most of services and gain return on investment
- Establish a partnership with the Institute of Technology to focus on our engineering pipeline
- Sponsor or support schools with a high pupil premium as well as special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) schools
- Offer support to school governors for schools most in need
- Establish relationships with charity partners and campaigning organisations to align provisions with the latest needs and policies
- Develop a strategic partnership with the Living Wage Foundation
- Collaborate across industries to support trailblazer apprenticeships and T-levels
- Develop Thames Water Academy within the education sector for use by our business, supply chain and wider industry

“We’ve signed up to Energy & Utilities Procurement Skills Accord - an initiative to promote investment in training and skills development not only in organisations, but in their supply chains too.”

David Wylie
Commercial & Procurement Director

Breaking down our principles



Principle 4

Adopt a leading position in the industry and with our supply chain on the development of skills

The background

The UK national skill shortage is a shared responsibility for our government and industries, but too often solutions are created in isolation with no joined-up approach or collaboration.

The skills gap is hindering the growth of our industry and our people, and we need to step up and take charge to make change happen.

By taking a leadership role and encouraging collaboration within our industry, we can begin to remove barriers to employment and make sure all people are afforded the same opportunity to succeed.

Where we are today

While we work across multiple boroughs and with several Local Enterprise Partnerships, our well-established relationships mainly focus on caring for the environment.

We do work closely with Energy & Utilities Skills to focus on developing skills within our industry, but we don't currently connect this approach to our work with other organisations in the sector.

As the largest provider in the water industry, there's much more we can do to maximise our role and take the lead on prevalent issues in society.

The opportunity

We want to be best-in-class for driving economic prosperity and boosting diversity.

This means working closely with our partners on a clear agenda for change and establishing a collaborative way to create learning opportunities for people across the industry.

We need to lead the way on key initiatives such as our untapped workforce, apprenticeships, care leavers, ex-offenders and adult skills.

We can also use our position as the UK's largest water provider to lobby for responsible employment practices and tackle unemployment, under-employment and in-work poverty.

Key actions to take

- Take a leadership role within our supply chain to remove barriers to employment and make sure all people are afforded the same opportunity
- Share skills and talent through apprenticeship schemes within our supply chain
- Lead by example and obtain national accreditation for our training courses
- Become a cornerstone employer with The Careers & Enterprise Company





Principle 4

Our recommendations

- Become a Living Wage employer to support brand, reputation, employee engagement and doing the right thing
- Apply the Living Wage accreditation throughout our supply chain
- Redefine our suppliers' requirements to offer apprenticeships throughout the supply chain, create more opportunities for those facing barriers to employment, promote diversity and embed the Procurement Skills Accord
- Continue to lead the way on diversity and inclusion within our supply chain and wider industry as a Disability Confident Leader
- Encourage our supply chain to work with local delivery partners to support community engagement and collaborate on local education schemes, community partnerships and community outreach programmes
- Establish shared apprenticeship schemes across our business and our suppliers
- Create secondments across our business and supply chain to develop specialist skill requirements
- Become a cornerstone employer with The Careers & Enterprise Company
- Raise awareness of real challenges and support 'good work for all'
- Work closely with sector skills councils and the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education to lead the way on trailblazer apprenticeships
- Raise awareness of 'in-work poverty' by championing causes such as essential skills, apprenticeships, sustainable development goals and reskilling
- Promote social inclusion, including supporting those facing barriers to access and progress within employment
- Actively work across the broader industry and with like-for-like sectors to drive economic diversity within our business and support apprenticeships
- Lead the way on covenants and recruit other businesses to support
- Take a leadership role on piloting new initiatives, such as T-levels, and create case studies that can be rolled out to other sectors (thought leadership)
- Join industry skills boards to share our knowledge on skills education and employment initiatives, including trailblazers
- Support industry-led initiatives and work with sector skills councils to pilot projects and work in a collaborative way
- Create and lead the right partnerships to support government initiatives
- Collaborate responses to government policy changes that impact the education, employment and skills agenda
- Share our apprenticeship levy to support small and medium-sized enterprises within our supply chain

Our priorities, partners and pledges

We're in the process of finalising our list of community priorities, partners and pledges - here's a snapshot of where we are now.

Community priorities

- Armed services leavers
- Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) groups
- Career returners
- Care leavers and those in care
- Carers
- Disabled people
- Domestic abuse survivors
- Ex-offenders and those at risk of offending
- Homeless people
- LGBT+ community
- Lone parents
- Older members of the community
- Refugees
- Women into STEM

Partners

- 5 % Club
- 10,000 Black Interns
- All-Party Parliamentary Groups
- Apprenticeship Ambassador Network
- Business in the Community
- The Careers & Enterprise Company
- Carer Confident
- City & Guilds

- Collab Group
- Department for Work and Pensions
- ELBA
- EngineeringUK
- Education and Skills Funding Agency
- Energy & Utilities Skills
- Further Education
- Greater London Authority
- Higher Education
- Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education
- Industry Skills Board
- Institutes of technology
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation
- Key4Life
- Local Enterprise Partnerships
- Living Wage Foundation
- London First
- London Progression Collaboration
- Movement to Work
- Skills Builder Partnership
- Stonewall
- Springpod
- Teach First
- Private providers
- Our supply chain
- Targeted schools / virtual schools

- Local authorities
- University Technical Colleges

Pledges and covenants

- 5 % Club
- 10,000 Black Interns
- Armed Forces Covenant
- Care Leaver Covenant
- Ban the Box
- Kickstart Scheme
- Lifetime Guarantee
- London Progression Collaboration
- Social Mobility Foundation
- Social Mobility Pledge
- Sustainability Development Goals
- Sector-based work academies
- Race to Work Charter
- WISE (Women in Science and Engineering)

We're also proud to be a Disability Confident Leader.

Glossary

Abbreviation	Subject	Description
10,000 Black Interns	10,000 Black Interns	The 10,000 Black Interns campaign will help transform the horizons and prospects of young Black people in the United Kingdom by encouraging businesses to offer paid work experience placements to young black people.
5% Club	5% Club	The 5% Club is a movement of employers working to create a shared prosperity across the UK by campaigning for greater skills training through 'earn and learn' job opportunities. Members aim to place 5% of their workforce in 'earn and learn' positions within five years of joining the club.
Apprentices	Apprentices	An apprentice is an individual of any age who is placed onto an apprenticeship course for a fixed amount of time, learning a trade or service from an employer via practical work and study. They are employed to work on-site for a company while completing a part-time qualification and implementing these skills into their everyday work. Through their apprenticeship, they upskill, develop and increase their knowledge in a particular sector, working towards improving their career prospects and opportunities. They eventually tailor their skills and experience towards a career path in their chosen sector.
Apprenticeship	Apprenticeship	An apprenticeship combines practical training in employment with study and encourages individuals to 'earn while you learn'. Apprentices work alongside experienced colleagues to gain specific skills, knowledge and behaviours by combining work-based employment and training, of which 20% must be 'off the job'. This equates to approximately one day a week and will help individuals work towards obtaining job-specific skills and a nationally recognised qualification. There are various levels of apprenticeships, ranging from level 2 to 7 (level 2 being intermediate and 7 equating to master's degree level), all of which have different programme durations (from 12 months for a level 2 and up to 60 months for a level 7). Apprenticeships are nationally recognised training schemes and are listed on the government's 'find an apprenticeship' website. Suitable candidates must be 16 or over, with no upper age limit, and must be a resident in the UK or EU for the last three years.
BAME	Black, Asian and minority ethnic	This stands for Black, Asian and minority ethnic and is defined as all ethnic groups except White ethnic groups.
Ban the Box	Ban the Box	Ban the Box is a campaign to increase opportunities for people with previous convictions to compete for jobs. The campaign is part of creating fair access to employment and encourages 'fair chance recruitment' practices by employers in the UK.
BiTC	Business in the Community	Business in the Community is a business community outreach charity promoting corporate social responsibility. As one of the Prince's Charities supported by Charles, Prince of Wales, BiTC works with companies across the UK and internationally who are committed to improving their impact on society.
CEC	The Careers & Enterprise Company	The Careers & Enterprise Company exists to facilitate a world-class careers education, inspiring and preparing young people for the world of work. Careers and enterprise education inspires, informs and immerses young people in the ever-changing world of work. CEC supports schools and colleges to deliver world-class careers education, responsive to individual pupil needs and underpinned by the internationally recognised Gatsby Career Benchmarks. They work with schools, colleges who are looking to enhance their careers provision and employers looking to inspire young people to join their industry.
CEIAG	Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance	CEIAG is designed to prepare students for life in modern Britain by providing the knowledge, understanding, confidence and skills they need to make informed choices and plans for their future learning and career.
CLC	Care Leaver Covenant	The Covenant is a promise made by private, public and voluntary organisations to provide support for care leavers aged 16-25 to help them to live independently. In July 2016, the government published 'Keep on Caring' to support young people from care to independence.
Community groups	Community groups	We partner with multiple organisations that support our communities in gaining skills, training and employability skills, such as Movement to Work, Key4Life and ELBA. These groups work with employers to drive social inclusion and make sure candidates are offered the some opportunities others cannot afford.
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions	The Department for Work and Pensions is responsible for welfare, pensions and child maintenance policy. As the UK's biggest public service department, it administers the State Pension and a range of working age, disability and ill health benefits to around 20 million claimants and customers.
EA	Enterprise Adviser	An Enterprise Adviser is a volunteer from a business who works closely with the headteacher or Senior Leadership Team of a school or college to provide strategic support. They use their experience and professional networks to help develop an effective careers strategy that puts opportunities with local employers at the heart of a young person's education.
ESFA	Education & Skills Funding Agency	The Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) determines the colleges and training organisations that are eligible to administer Advanced Learner Loans, including eligible learning aims and the maximum loans available for those aims.
EU Skills	Energy & Utility Skills	Energy & Utility Skills brings industry leaders together to identify and address the skills challenges our sector faces. They provide membership, assurance and skills solutions to help employers attract, develop and retain a sustainable, skilled workforce, ensuring the seamless delivery of essential services to 65 million people each day and UK industry. The UK-wide membership comprises major infrastructure companies within water, power, gas and waste management and their top tiers of delivery partners.

Abbreviation	Subject	Description
FE	Further Education	Further education is education below degree level for those people above school age. It includes any study after secondary education that's not part of higher education (i.e. not taken as part of an undergraduate or graduate degree). Courses range from basic English and maths to Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) and includes three types of technical qualifications for 16 to 19-year-olds: level 3 to specialise in a specific technical job; level 2 to help get employment or progress to another tech level; and applied general qualifications to continue general education at an advanced level through applied learning.
Gatsby Benchmarks	Gatsby Benchmarks	The Gatsby Benchmarks are a framework of eight guidelines that define the best careers provision in secondary schools. Every young person needs high-quality career guidance to make informed decisions about their future. The eight Gatsby benchmarks of Good Career Guidance are a stable careers programme; learning from career and labour market information; addressing the needs of each pupil; linking curriculum learning to careers; encounters with employers and employees; experiences of workplaces; encounters with further and higher education; and personal guidance.
Green jobs	Green jobs	Green jobs are jobs in businesses that produce goods or provide services that benefit the environment or conserve natural resources.
GWFA	Good work for all	Creating meaningful employment is one of the most significant ways businesses contribute to the livelihoods of individuals and communities and is for many the only sustainable route out of poverty. Offering quality experience of work, adopting new approaches to recruitment and breaking down barriers to work for people from disadvantaged groups can benefit business by tackling skills shortages, building new talent pipelines, boosting retention rates and achieving higher productivity.
HE	Higher Education	Higher education is third-level education after you leave school. It takes place at universities and further education colleges, normally includes undergraduate and postgraduate study, and usually results in a named degree, diploma or certificate of higher studies. Higher education also includes teacher-training schools, junior colleges and institutes of technology.
IAG	Information, Advice and Guidance	Information, advice and guidance activities help individuals gain information about opportunities open to them for learning or work as well as various issues such as housing, benefits, debt, childcare, health and so on.
IFATE	Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education	The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education is an employer-led, non-departmental public body. It oversees the development, approval and publication of apprenticeship standards and assessment plans as well as the occupational maps for T-levels and apprenticeships.
IoT	Institute of Technology	IoTs are collaborations between further education providers, universities and employers. They specialise in delivering higher technical education at levels 4 and 5 with a focus on STEM subjects.
JCP	Jobcentre Plus	Jobcentre Plus is part of the Department for Work and Pensions and acts as a working-age support service for the UK.
KS	Kickstart Scheme	The government launched its new £2 billion Kickstart Scheme to help young people into work amid the economic crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic. The scheme will fund employers to create placements for 16 to 24-year-olds on Universal Credit at risk of long-term unemployment. Under the scheme, employers will be able to offer young people placements for 26 weeks.
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership	A Local Enterprise Partnership is a locally-owned partnership between local authorities and businesses. An LEP plays a central role in deciding local economic priorities, driving economic growth and creating local jobs. There are 38 LEPs currently operating within England, and each one is a member of the LEP Network. Board members include local leaders of industry (including SMEs), educational institutions and individuals from the public sector.
LWF	Living Wage Foundation	The Living Wage Foundation is a campaigning organisation that aims to persuade employers to pay a living wage. The organisation was established in 2011, publishes an annual Living Wage figure and accredits employers who pay the wage.
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training	This stands for Not in Education, Employment or Training and refers to a person who is unemployed and not receiving education or vocational training.
PET	Pre-employment training (PET)/ Employability training	This focuses on providing employability skills through a specific programme. PET targets those who have little employability and work-ready skills and helps improve opportunities to gain employment. Candidates receive training to be not just job-ready but also brand-ready as each programme is tailored to current vacancies. PET provides interview technique practice, confidence building activities and coaching on communication skills. Candidates also receive CV writing workshops and mock interviews, ensuring they're equipped for the world of work.
Pupil premium	Pupil premium	The pupil premium is a grant given by the government to schools in England to decrease the attainment gap for children disadvantaged by income or family upheaval. Evidence shows that children from disadvantaged backgrounds generally face extra challenges in reaching their potential at school and often do not perform as well as their peers. For each pupil who is eligible for free school meals, the school receives funding. This allows schools to support disadvantaged pupils and improve their progress and exam results. Publicly-funded schools in England get extra funding from the government to help them improve the attainment of their disadvantaged pupils.
Returner	Returner	A returner is an individual who has previous work experience but has taken an extended break due to personal circumstances, such as caring responsibilities, and is now looking to return to work. Returners are economically inactive (not in work and not previously seeking work) and will have been so for at least one year.

Abbreviation	Subject	Description
SAS	Shared Apprenticeship Scheme (SAS)	An SAS is specially designed to support employers who wish to hire apprentices but may be unable to commit to employment for the duration of an apprenticeship. Through the SAS, employers commit to hosting an apprentice for a minimum of six months. This initiative works across Thames Water and its supply chain as well as a wide range of employers and organisations, supporting continued employment and enabling apprentices to complete their learning and achieve their qualifications. This also allows apprentices to experience different types of employers and learn about various aspects and views of customer and supplier, creating more rounded individuals.
SBF	The Skills Builder Framework	The Skills Builder Framework breaks down eight essential skills (listening, speaking, problem solving, creativity, staying positive, aiming high, leadership and teamwork) into 16 teachable and measurable steps. This can be used with children, young people and in industry to clarify what success looks like for each skill and to map out the trajectory for proficiency. SBF work to ensure that one day, everyone will have the essential skills, experiences and aspirations they need to succeed.
SE	Social exclusion	Social exclusion describes a state in which individuals are unable to participate fully in economic, social, political and cultural life, as well as the process leading to and sustaining such a state.
SED	Socioeconomic diversity	Socioeconomic background relates to a combination of an individual's income, occupation and social background. It's a key determinant of success and future life chances. Socioeconomic diversity is a mix of employees from different income levels, social backgrounds, and in some cases, racial and ethnic backgrounds.
SEND	Special educational needs and disabilities	All schools have a duty to be accessible and inclusive for the children within their community to ensure the best possible education. Special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) can affect a child's or young person's ability to learn as well as their behaviour or ability to socialise; ability to understand things; concentration levels or physical ability.
SI	Social inclusion	Social inclusion is the process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society - improving the ability, opportunity and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity.
SM	Social mobility	Social mobility is the link between a person's occupation or income and the occupation or income of their parents. When there's a strong link, there's a lower level of social mobility. When there's a weak link, there's a higher level of social mobility. It's the transition of hierarchy from social status and cultural status from a vertical movement up the ladder. In some cases, social mobility is intergenerational, and children attain a higher or lower status than their parents held.
SMF	Social Mobility Foundation	The Social Mobility Foundation is a charity that aims to practically improve social mobility for young people. It was founded in 2005 to provide opportunities and networks of support for 16-17 year olds who can't get them from their schools or families.
SMP	Social Mobility Pledge	Founded by former UK Cabinet Minister, Rt Hon. Justine Greening, and UK entrepreneur David Harrison, the Social Mobility Pledge represents a powerful and pioneering shift towards being a truly purpose-led organisation committed to social mobility. There are three key elements of the Pledge: outreach, access and recruitment. Taking steps to boost social mobility is more important than ever as we face a growing opportunity gap in the wake of COVID-19.
STEM	Science, technology, engineering and mathematics	STEM is an approach to learning and development that integrates the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Through STEM, students develop key skills like problem solving.
STEAM	Science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics	STEAM stands for science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics. An extension of STEM education, which was created in 2001, STEAM education adds art to the existing set of focus areas.
SWAP	Sector-based work academy program	The sector-based work academy programme (SWAP) helps businesses develop a skilled workforce. Sector-based work academies prepare those receiving unemployment benefits to apply for jobs in a different area of work. Placements are designed to help businesses meet immediate and future recruitment needs as well as recruit a workforce with the right skills to sustain and grow. A sector-based work academy can last up to six weeks. Placements include pre-employment training matched to business sector needs; a work experience placement to identify talent and cement knowledge and understanding; and a guaranteed job interview or help with an employer's recruitment process. An important feature of SWAP is that each sector-based work academy offers a flexible approach and can be adapted to meet the needs of a business. Placements are particularly useful for young people but are open to all jobseekers aged 18 upwards.
SWP	Strategic Workforce Planning	SWP is a comprehensive and structured approach to identifying the likely future labour and skills demands in the next 10 years, enabling businesses to align people strategies against requirements. SWP produces a comprehensive assessment of the workforce renewal challenges, including the nature and extent of current and future vacancies and the development of appropriate resourcing strategies to meet the predicted skills and workforce demands.
T- Levels	T-levels	T-levels are new courses that follow GCSEs and are equivalent to three A-levels. These two-year courses, which launched September 2020, have been developed in collaboration with employers and businesses so that the content meets the needs of industry and prepares students for work, further training or study. T-levels offer students a mixture of classroom learning and 'on-the-job' experience during an industry placement of at least 315 hours (approximately 45 days).

Abbreviation	Subject	Description
TF	Teach First	Teach First is a social enterprise registered as a charity that aims to address educational disadvantage in England and Wales. It develops and supports teachers and leaders who are determined to make a difference where it's needed the most.
Team Thames	Team Thames	Team Thames refers to our diverse workforce across sites, offices and labs around London and the Thames Valley. Every individual who works directly for Thames Water as well as our valued contractors is considered to be part of Team Thames.
UTC	University Technical Colleges	University Technical Colleges are government-funded schools with a STEM focus. They provide a unique and relevant approach to education that addresses the changing needs of students and employers in the 21st century.
WEX	Work experience	Work experience is time spent in a workplace learning about a job role, a company or a career sector. Work experience is not just for young people - it can be useful for career changers and people looking to get back into work, helping them gain skills and decide what to do in their future career.

Version 2

